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PROSECUTOR CLOSES DOOR TO PRESS ON KING CLAIMS

MEMPHIS, Tenn, Dec 17 (Reuter) - A prosecutor held a news conference Friday to say he wouldn't talk to the press any longer about claims James Earl Ray did not kill civil rights leader until an investigation is completed.

Shelby County Attorney General John Pierotti told reporters his office and the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation would investigate reports that a Memphis businessman arranged King's assassination.

The businessman, Lloyd Jowers, interviewed on the ABC-TV programme "Prime Time Live," demanded immunity from prosecution before testifying about his role.

King was killed April 4, 1968, on a Memphis hotel balcony after coming to the city to support strikers.

Ray, who initially confessed to the slaying, has since maintained that he is innocent. He is serving a 99-year prison sentence.

King's family have declined to comment on case. But the